

REMARKS

Claims 12, 14-36, 38-58, 60-75 and 80-82 remain pending in this application.

Claims 12, 34, 54 and 82 are amended to clarify the subject matter.

Claims 26, 80 and 81 are amended to better differentiate from the prior art in order to overcome the claim rejections.

Dependent claims 22 and 30 are amended to correct minor clerical errors.

The amendments are fully supported by the original description. More particularly, the amendments made to claim 26 and claim 81 are fully described in at least paragraph 60 and the end of paragraph 73, and all of the figures, especially Figures 2, 5, 11 and 13. The amendments made to claim 80 are described in at least paragraphs 61-67 and can be reasonably inferred from the shape of the jaws in Figures 6, 7A, 7E, 8A, 8B and 10. The changes made to claims 34, 54 and 82 reflect the subject matter of claim 12.

No new subject matter is therefore introduced by this amendment.

Rejection of claims 12 and 14-25 under 35 USC 112

The Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for the following reasons.

In response to the rejection of claims 12 and 14-25 under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, the Applicant submits that the original specification fully supports the subject matter of claim 12. Figures 1, 3A, 5, 6, 8A, 8B, 9 to 14 all suggest an aperture for the jaws, whereby "the area (of the films is) free of contact." The Applicant nevertheless clarifies the claim language such that claim 12 recites: "the area being free of contact with at least one of said jaws."

Further in response to the rejection of claims 12 and 14-25 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, the Applicant submits that claim 12 is now clarified. No ambiguity exists between the "bringing into contact" at line 3 and the "being free of contact" at line 6.

The Applicant also points out that the description fully supports the aperture claimed in claim 12. The fact that several kinds of clamps are disclosed in the description does not preclude the Applicant from claiming one or more of the disclosed

examples. The claimed limitations now clearly define the aperture without any transparent material thereon.

The Applicant therefore submits that claim 12 is compliant with 35 USC 112. A reconsideration of the claimed subject matter is kindly requested.

Claims 14-25, which depend on claim 12, are deemed allowable now that the rejection directed to claim 12 is answered.

Rejections under 35 USC 103

The Applicant submits the above amended claims along with the following arguments.

Claim 12

With respect to claim 12, the Applicant understands from the Office Action that the rejections under 35 USC 103 were removed in light of the amendments submitted in the previous official communication.

Further in light of the above arguments concerning claim 12, the Applicant submits that claim 12 is patentable, and a notice to that effect is kindly solicited.

Claim 26

With respect to amended claim 26, the Applicant submits that none of the prior art teaches at least the claimed limitation "shaping the intensity profile of the single laser beam with respect to a volume of the films to be exposed by using an optical device, the intensity profile of the single laser beam comprising a first intensity for a cut region in the volume, and a second intensity for each one of two sealed regions in the volume."

With respect to Kendall, the Applicant points out that Kendall discloses a laser beam which is used to form three laser beams, each of the three laser beams having an intensity profile dedicated to performing one of a cut and a seal in its own exposure area on the films (refer to Fig. 1, items 4, 5 and 6). Kendall therefore does not suggest the subject matter as claimed in claim 26.

The Final Office Action states on page 21, point (d) in comparing the claimed subject matter with the prior art, that that "the Applicant's disclosed invention also divides the laser beam in order to produce the cutting and the sealing action, see

Fig. 8B, where the point of the contact clamp (31') divides the laser beam into two portions, which would become reflected 'beams'." In response, the Applicant submits that the claim language in claim 26 does not recite any re-injecting or dividing of the incident laser beam, and thus the above-recited statement as to the formation of another laser 'beam' corresponding to a reflected beam does not apply. It is clear from the language of claim 26, that the single laser beam has the intensity profile to form both the cut and the seal regions.

In view of the above, the Applicant submits that claim 26 is non-obvious over the prior art.

Claims 81 recites similar limitations as present claim 26. In view of the arguments submitted above concerning claim 26, claim 81 is also deemed to be non-obvious over the prior art.

Concerning claims 34, 54, and 82, these now recite similar limitations as present claim 12, which is already deemed allowable under 35 USC 103 and under 35 USC 112 for the above reasons. Claims 34, 54, and 82 are therefore submitted as being non-obvious over the prior art. A reconsideration of the claimed subject matter is kindly requested.

With respect to amended claim 80, the Applicant submits that Nettesheim does not disclose at least the claimed limitation: "increasing an intensity of the laser beam in the volume by re-injecting partly or totally an unabsorbed portion of the incident laser beam intensity that has not been absorbed by the sheets back to the sheets by using at least one reflective device, the at least one reflective device dividing the unabsorbed portion of the incident laser beam intensity in at least two reflected laser beams each for increasing the intensity in a different portion of the volume, thereby improving the efficiency of the sealing or cutting method by having more light intensity of said incident laser intensity absorbed by the sheets."

Nettesheim discloses a counter reflector 62 "whose cross section complements the upper surface 27 of the reflector 26 in the focal point to an almost complete ellipse." "The other focal point 63 lies in the middle of the two films 18 to be welded together" (and) "the light which is directly radiated from the lamp 29 to the window 36 is concentrated by the upper surface 62 on the focal line 63" (4, lines 11-18). Nettesheim therefore teaches concentrating the light at the focal line 63 which lies in the middle of

the two films to be welded together, or in a single portion. Nettesheim does not teach re-injection as claimed in present claim 80 and as at least as stated above.

In view of the above, the Applicant submits that claim 80 is non-obvious over the prior art.

In view of the amendments and the above remarks, the Applicant submits that claims 26, 34, 54 and 80-82 are non-obvious over the prior art. A reconsideration of the claimed subject matter is kindly requested.

Further in view of the above arguments, dependent claims 27-33, 35-53 and 55-79, being dependent on either one of independent claims 26, 34 and 54, are also non-obvious over the prior art.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, this application is now believed to be in condition for allowance and early notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

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